

**Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations
Criterion-Referenced Test**

Released Item Book

Reading

Grade

6



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Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations—Criterion-Referenced Test
(WKCE-CRT)

Released Item Book

What are released items?

The items in this book are actual items from the fall 2005 state assessment, the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations—Criterion-Referenced Test (WKCE-CRT). These items will not be used again on the state assessment and may, therefore, be used in Wisconsin for professional development, improving instruction, and student practice. The items in this book illustrate the formats and kinds of items that students will encounter on the WKCE-CRT.

How do I use this book?

Professional Development

Released items are useful as educators engage in conversations about what students are expected to know and be able to do to demonstrate proficiency on the state assessments relative to the state model academic standards. Released items can inform discussions about state and local standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Improving Instruction

Teachers may use released items in classroom activities that help students understand how to:

- solve problems
- determine which answer choices are correct, which are incorrect, and why
- respond to constructed response items with complete, thoughtful answers
- approach long and/or multi-step tasks
- use good test-taking strategies.

Student Practice

Students may perform better and with less anxiety if they are familiar with the format of the test and with the types of items they will be required to answer. See the accompanying guide for instructions on administering the released item book as a practice test and for the answer key. Note that a student's score on the practice test cannot be converted to a scale score, used to predict performance on the operational WKCE-CRT, or used to make inferences about the student's learning.

Directions

Read the passage "Philippe and the Blue Parrot." Then answer Numbers 1 through 9.

Philippe and the Blue Parrot

by Nancy White Carlstrom

When Philippe was a young boy, his mother told him a story about a beautiful blue parrot who stole a golden earring from the sun.

"Watch for it, Philippe, my boy," she said. "And when you find that golden earring, we will never go hungry again."

And so Philippe kept his head down as he walked to school through the streets of Port-au-Prince, always looking for a glint of gold.

Years passed. Philippe did well in his studies. He was especially good at art. When Philippe was thirteen, he decided to make a birthday gift for his mother.

He took his art supplies to the park, and there, leaning the canvas against a bench, he painted *Blue Parrot and the Sun*. As he waited for the paint to dry, he studied the blue smudges between his fingers and a drop of yellow shining on his black wrist.

"Is that for sale?"

Philippe was startled by the question. He had not heard the tourist walk up to him. The woman squinted her eyes at the bright colors and asked again.

"Is that for sale?" Before Philippe could answer, she added, "I'll pay twenty-five dollars for it."



Twenty-five dollars! That was more than Philippe had earned in his whole life. It would take a long time to make that much money, even if he could get a job. What wonderful things he could buy his mother.

And so Philippe sold *Blue Parrot and the Sun*.

Years passed. Philippe's paintings were sold in a Port-au-Prince gallery. Many tourists liked his work and bought the canvases.

Every time Philippe painted a *Blue Parrot and the Sun* for his mother, the gallery owner had a buyer. The price went up and Philippe could not resist. But every time he sold a Blue Parrot, he put aside some money for his mother.

Many years passed. Now Philippe's paintings could not be afforded by most tourists. His work hung in galleries and museums in Europe and the United States.

One day, he sat in his fine studio, ready to begin work on another *Blue Parrot and the Sun*. A journalist who had come to interview him stood nearby.

"Monsieur, your *Blue Parrot and the Sun* paintings are now very famous. Some critics say that they have a life and power that your other works lack. Why is that? Do you know?"

"Oh yes, I know," Philippe replied slowly. "It is because I paint each *Blue Parrot* for my mother."

"And how much will this new one sell for?" the journalist asked. "Thousands, I suppose?"

"Oh, this painting will not be for sale," Philippe answered. He knew he had said that before, but this time, he really meant it.

And he added: "I found the golden earring many years ago. Now it's time to give it back."

• • • • •

There is a story the art collectors tell about a famous painting called *Blue Parrot and the Sun*. Oh, there are many, but the one to hunt for has a small golden earring hidden in the picture. Yes, that is the one worth a fortune. Some say it hangs on the wall of a simple house in the Haitian countryside. Others are not so sure. It could be anywhere.



1 Why did Philippe paint the first *Blue Parrot and the Sun*?

- Ⓐ A gallery requested the painting.
- Ⓑ He painted it for a school project.
- Ⓒ He wanted to earn money for food.
- Ⓓ He planned to give it away as a gift.

2 What does the golden earring represent?

- Ⓐ family
- Ⓑ wealth
- Ⓒ a mystery
- Ⓓ a painting

3 What happens right after Philippe finishes his first *Blue Parrot* painting?

- Ⓐ A journalist interviews him.
- Ⓑ A tourist asks to buy the painting.
- Ⓒ He gives the painting to his mother.
- Ⓓ He begins working on another painting.

4 Which of these words best describes Philippe?

- Ⓐ determined
- Ⓑ lazy
- Ⓒ powerful
- Ⓓ selfish

5 Where does the conclusion of this passage take place?

- Ⓐ at a park
- Ⓑ in a studio
- Ⓒ in a gallery
- Ⓓ at a museum

6 What would most likely happen if Philippe sold his last *Blue Parrot and the Sun* painting?

- Ⓐ He would begin painting another.
- Ⓑ His mother would become upset with him.
- Ⓒ His work would become even more famous.
- Ⓓ The gallery would stop selling his paintings.

7 Who most likely received Philippe's *Blue Parrot and the Sun* with the hidden golden earring?

- Ⓐ a museum
- Ⓑ his mother
- Ⓒ a lucky tourist
- Ⓓ an art collector

8 Read these sentences from the passage.

"I found the golden earring many years ago. Now it's time to give it back."

Philippe most likely plans to give the golden earring back by

- Ⓐ giving his mother a special gift
- Ⓑ opening a new art studio in his hometown
- Ⓒ making his paintings affordable to everyone
- Ⓓ sharing the blue parrot story with the journalist

9 Read this sentence from the passage.

And so Philippe kept his head down as he walked to school through the streets of Port-au-Prince, always looking for a glint of gold.

What does the word glint mean in this sentence?

- Ⓐ blob
- Ⓑ picture
- Ⓒ sparkle
- Ⓓ treasure



Directions

Read the passage “It Bounces, It Floats.” Then answer Numbers 10 through 19.

It Bounces, It Floats

by Caroline Mott Ford



Do they bounce? You may think that’s a silly question to ask about cranberries. Farmers think it’s not silly. Good cranberries bounce; bad ones don’t.

One of the early settlers of our country discovered this himself. According to legend, Peg Leg John, a New Jersey farmer, was packing cranberries in his barn. One box fell over. John noticed that all the spoiled and dried-out cranberries just remained where they fell. The fresh, ripe ones bounced.

Old Peg Leg John’s method of sorting berries is still used by packers today. Each cranberry harvested must bounce over several wooden barriers. The high jumpers, able to leap over barriers in a single bound, make it to the finish line. These are the ones we want on our table for Thanksgiving.

Cranberry plants trail along the ground like a low-growing evergreen. They are a productive crop in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Oregon, Washington, and New Jersey. In the New Jersey Pine Barrens, they often grow wild. There the bright red berries are nicknamed the “rubies of the pines.”

These amazing berries also float. Today, many growers harvest their crops by flooding their fields or cranberry bogs. A machine much like a paddle boat beats the plants, loosening the fruit. The ripe cranberries float to the surface and are collected

in a process called rafting. During rafting, the cranberry-gathering crew pushes the floating berries with long wooden tools to the end of the bog. The berries are gathered up and placed in boxes.

The flower of the cranberry plant looks like the beak of a crane. This is why the Pilgrims referred to it as a crane berry. Later, the common name became cranberry.

We can’t be sure of the menu for the first Thanksgiving Day, but it’s almost certain that cranberries were served. The fruit was an important food to the American Indians. They called it sassamanesh or ibimi. It was used in pemmican, a dried trail food. The Indians also used the tart scarlet berries in making red dye and medicines.

The early settlers stored barrels of the berries on ships for long ocean voyages. The high vitamin C content helped prevent scurvy¹ among the sailors.

Today, cranberries are used in juice as well as sauce. Cranberry juice is often mixed with other, sweeter fruit juices for a healthful, good-tasting drink.

Cranberries—they’re truly super berries!

¹**scurvy:** a disease that is caused by lack of vitamin C

10 This passage is mostly about how cranberries

- Ⓐ are used in recipes
- Ⓑ are used by sailors
- Ⓒ are nutritious and tasty
- Ⓓ are grown and harvested

11 According to the passage, why did the early settlers pack cranberries for their voyages?

- Ⓐ to prevent scurvy
- Ⓑ to eat as trail food
- Ⓒ to squeeze into juice
- Ⓓ to make clothing dye

12 The author most likely wrote this passage in order to

- Ⓐ describe how cranberries are packed in boxes
- Ⓑ explain the health benefits of eating cranberries
- Ⓒ encourage more people to drink cranberry juice
- Ⓓ provide information about the history of cranberries

13 Cranberries are nicknamed “rubies of the pines” because they

- Ⓐ are bright red in color
- Ⓑ grow in evergreen trees
- Ⓒ are worth a lot of money
- Ⓓ grow wild in some places

14 According to the passage, what is the first step in harvesting cranberries?

- Ⓐ placing the berries in boxes
- Ⓑ flooding the cranberry bogs
- Ⓒ beating the plants to loosen the fruit
- Ⓓ pushing the berries with a wooden tool

15 Which of these sentences from the passage expresses an opinion?

- Ⓐ Old Peg Leg John’s method of sorting berries is still used by packers today.
- Ⓑ The berries are gathered up and placed in boxes.
- Ⓒ The flower of the cranberry plant looks like the beak of a crane.
- Ⓓ The early settlers stored barrels of the berries on ships for long ocean voyages.



16 In this passage, the cranberry is compared to a

- Ⓐ bog
- Ⓑ dye
- Ⓒ jewel
- Ⓓ vitamin

17 The author most likely included the last sentence in the passage in order to

- Ⓐ create a picture of a cranberry
- Ⓑ clarify how cranberries are used
- Ⓒ show enthusiasm for cranberries
- Ⓓ describe the taste of cranberry juice

18 This passage is an example of nonfiction because it

- Ⓐ tells a story
- Ⓑ includes illustrations
- Ⓒ states facts about a topic
- Ⓓ has been retold many times

19

Write a summary explaining how cranberries are harvested and used today. Be sure to thoroughly support your answer using details and examples from the passage. Write your answer on the lines below.

STOP 

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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
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